



Native art will find an audience at the Aruba Marriott Resort

During a lively opening ceremony in the lobby of the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino an alliance was unveiled between the resort and Aruba's Numismatic Museum on Wednesday evening. To the delight of hotel guests, management and Desiree Croes, curator of the museum, a collection of work by twelve of the island's finest artists were prominently placed on display in the main lobby of the resort.

This particular collection is devoted to the theme of San Juan Dera Gai, the traditional holiday in June, which offers an insight into Aruba's ancient Indian cultural heritage. As stated by Marriott General Manager, Rick Zeolla, "it is an excellent method to bring the art of Aruba to the island's visitors. You have to search to see displays of island artists. It is there; it is accessible and it is available, but for the most part, people don't take the time to go look for it [while on vacation.] So we thought we would give them easy access to art, softly educate them a little bit about Aruban culture and Aruban traditions. This is a side of Aruba that they very rarely see."

What appears to be a very successful initiative is a result of perfect timing. Karin Swiers, PR Manager of the Marriott, revealed the hotel "thought it was time to bring more of the Aruban feel and touch into the resort. Aside from changing their logo, we decided to also bring in more of the culture, art and traditions. Just at that time we were approached by the director of the Museo Numismatico, and it was Desiree's dream to build a bridge between the island's art and culture and the island's visitors.

The evening of the opening the gap was bridged by not only the beautiful works of art, but also traditional dances in Dera Gai costume by the team of Raquel and Luis Maduro and the youthful folkloric dance group MC-4. It also offered guests the opportunity to meet and discuss the works with the artists that created them.

In conjunction with the Fundacion Arte Aruba, the Numismatic Museum has brought together a collection of works by Maria Teresa Martinez, director of Arte Aruba and other esteemed Aruban artists. Contributing to the exhibition are Mo Mohammed, Frank Croes, Elvis Tromp, Ephraim Britten, Alfonso de Windt, Juancho Dijkhoff, Marisol Canizales, Jani Croes, Edmond Tuyeehut, Laureen Croes ad Marlen van Blarcum. All of the works on display are for sale with prices starting at \$300 (U.S.) The Marriott has already purchased the Edmond Tuyeehut piece to keep on permanent display. By the end of the evening, a number of tourists had already picked out a favorite painting that they hoped to take back to the U.S. with them.

The free exhibition is available for viewing twenty-four hours a day: until November 12, 2005. The plan of the organizers and the hotel is to change the exhibit on a monthly basis, so works by many of Aruba's fine artists, devoted to a variety of themes, can be enjoyed throughout the year. Everyone is invited to come and view the display, not only Marriott guest, which can be found in the hotel's main lobby.